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DCI Speech
to
CIA: Today and Tomorrow
Headquarters Auditorium
4 March 1976

MR. RODRIGUEZ. It seems only yesterday that it was Tuesday and we opened this program. I just want to say that, having been here so long, I have had something to do with every man whose painting is in that corridor, beginning with General Donovan who gave me about seven minutes before he sent me on my way to North Africa. In talking about "Today and Tomorrow," I want to say that in my opinion George Bush, the Director of Central Intelligence, is the man for these times. The Director.

THE DIRECTOR. Thank you, Rod. I do want to thank Sue and the others who invited me to come here and to congratulate them for the success of this kind of a program. I've looked over the pamphlet you have, and I was impressed with the depth of the presentations. I think I, probably more than anybody in the world, might have profited by being able to attend this session because I don't know who has been here a shorter time than I. I know that the people that did all but this part of the program spoke to you with a great deal of experience in their backgrounds and a great deal of expertise.

I do want to say a few words about my new job and about the direction that I think this Agency is going and should go and, also, because of my responsibilities, the direction in which the entire Intelligence Community must go. So we will talk briefly about "Today and Tomorrow" which is the subject of this seminar. People have asked me, you know, "How do you like your new job?" That's the standard thing you ask people when they get into a new job, and it reminds me very much of the early days of the space program when they catapulted the two brightest monkeys they could find out into outer space. These guys got to about 58,000 feet going straight up--Duckett's shop worked this out for them--and one of them took off his oxygen mask and he turned to the other monkey and said, "This is one hell of a way to make a living, isn't it?" The other one says, "Yeah, but it beats the heck out of the cancer research lab." People ask me, you know, and the happy part is that that might have been my apprehension when I was riding my bicycle along peacefully trying to understand [REDACTED]

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field of expertise which is the People's Republic of China, but I don't feel that way any more. I have been most impressed with this place and, I should quickly add, with the others in the Intelligence Community--operations at the NSA and DIA and the other components of the Community. I've been impressed with the order of the place; with the excellence that's in place here; with the morale in spite of an enormous battering and with the dedication that obviously accounts for these things. I was in China during most of the hearings and I hadn't really been able to grasp from Peking what the pressures were on the Intelligence Community as a result of the exposures and as a result of some events that obviously caused concern to everybody in this room--some of the things that went wrong and that really don't deserve, in a constitutional system, any defense. However isolated they may have been, and spaced out over a number of years though they may have been, these seemed to take over the whole public awareness, and thus mask the enormous accomplishments and the enormous capabilities of the people involved in intelligence. So, when I came back here from China, I was amazed at the depth of the emotion surrounding the whole question of CIA and I expect I can't pretend to understand it as much as some of you and your families, having gone through an extremely difficult period. I have the utmost respect in this regard for my predecessor who devoted his life to this place and handled his job with sensitivity in the face of tremendous provocation. I have great respect for him, and I have great respect for each of you who has gone through this difficult period. I must say I have been extremely pleased that this kind of battering doesn't seem to have affected adversely the morale in this place (although I expect it needs some time) and, fundamentally much more important, the intelligence capability. I worry some about it. I worry some about how other services who cooperate with us look at us. Can they trust us with a piece of paper or work with us on some involvement with some individual? Do they know that we can keep our word? Do they know that we have the will as a country not to destroy not only ourselves, our own capability, but that of others? There are enormous problems like this facing us, so I'm not saying there's been no damage, but I'm addressing myself to what I think--with at least one month's experience in observation, you might say, into this--as to how this place feels compared to other places I've been, and I've been extremely impressed. And I can tell you that the strap hangers that came out here with the President of the United States sensed it. The President goes nowhere without being followed by zillions of people, and I can't figure out who most of them

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are, but, nevertheless, they come sweeping in and it was a great thing for our President to come here because he sensed it. Some of you met him in the building. And the press that came here sensed the spirit of this place and the others from the White House sensed it, and I think its good because it helped them see first hand the spirit of the CIA. We do have, in spite of this, a fundamental public relations problem, if you will. I looked recently at a Harris Poll and the Harris Poll conclusions, without analyzing it too scientifically as to its objectivity, were somewhat stark in suggesting that there is a lack of confidence in the CIA across the country--down from another poll taken some ten years ago by Gallup. But I don't think its fair to take a poll on the Intelligence Community in 1976 or the end of 1975 and compare it just starkly to where the confidence factor in this place stood ten years ago, and the reason I don't is that if you want to look at it that way, you've got to look other institutions as well. You've got to look at the Congress; you've got to look at the Executive Branch; you've got to look at businesses or labor unions; and I think you'll find that the CIA has suffered no more in terms of public opinion than other institutions. We're going through a time in our country's history where the American people seem to take delight in tearing down our institutions, maybe for some good reason--okay, there were some mistakes made here, mistakes made in Israel, and that type of thing--but I'll not be troubled by these numbers because I'm not sure that the CIA, in terms of basic support from the American people, is suffering more than other institutions. As I move out around this country, and I'm beginning to do it more, I find a strong basis of support for the CIA and for our need for a strong intelligence capability all across the United States. So I think there is this pendulum effect, and I think because some of you have stood up and taken an awful lot of flack, it's made it a lot easier for some of us who have come here recently to emphasize now the positive assets--which are enormous in this Agency. But as we look at today, we have one set of circumstances, and, as we look at tomorrow, we have another. Each of us has had inculcated into us the need for secrecy and it's still here. Bella Abzug to the contrary notwithstanding, it's still here. Certain things must be secret if we are going to conduct ourselves as professionals in intelligence. But I am convinced that, without weakening our capabilities, we need to take a new look at our classification. This is in the Executive Order. It is something that the national security system is doing, and you know and I know--I don't have to come to the CIA to know this because I've been associated with the State Department for three years--that there are

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some kinds of documents that are classified that need not be. I'm not bright enough to know exactly which ones they are because certain sources and methods involved in an innocuous-looking document can give something away to somebody who's not looking out after our best interests. I do think that the answer lies in a review of classification so that we can take the things I've found in the month I've been here--the good things, the strong things about this Agency--and convey these as much as possible without weakening our potential; without discouraging our services; to let the American people know as much as we can about the tremendous asset that they have in a strong Central Intelligence Agency. It's not easy, but I feel mandated under the new Executive Order to spend at least some of my time in working with my associates in this Agency to implement that part of the order. It will help, too. I made the mistake over Christmas, while I was still gainfully unemployed between China and here, to go see a movie called "Three Days of the Condor." (I can tell some of you others have made the same mistake and gone to see "Three Days of the Condor.") I went with my daughter who is madly and passionately in love with Robert Redford, so I had to indulge her whims and went to see this thing. Well, you know, it's a fairly good shoot-em-up and, if I were totally untutored in this business, I might have got a yak out of it; but it was a very vicious and sinister piece because what it did was to lay at the CIA's doorstep all kinds of outrageous things that the CIA by its severest critics has never been accused of. And that twist at the end! Robert Redford in rightful indignation--I don't know whether he'd done in the DCI, but somebody out here in Langley caught hell, and all these guys were shooting each other, each of you shooting the guy next to you, and another guy working out in OER or OCI or whatever, all these ghastly things--when this is all over, Redford decides, "I've got to come clean on all this." So he walks into the New York Times to spill his guts and thus make justice come at the end, and then there is this twist: well, maybe they'll print it and maybe they won't--which indicates that the CIA controls the New York Times. Well, if we control it, we're doing a hell of a job with the editorial content they're coming out with! This is tough propaganda. I studied at Yale University something about propaganda. I'm not an expert, but, fortunately, we've got some in this building. This is tough, and to the degree that we can be frank and open with the American people and not be afraid to appear, to the degree you who do not have some cover relationship can hold your heads up and talk within carefully defined security guidelines about just the spirit of this

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place, I think we can all do a whale of a job in capitalizing on the fundamental support that's there in the American people.

A quick word about the future. By a rather all-encompassing Executive Order which, I'm pleased to say, preserves the basic strengths and, in a way, enhances the basic strengths of the CIA, I've been charged, as the DCI, 25X1A with certain reorganizational steps that must be taken. There are going to be changes. There's a new Committee on Foreign Intelligence. I don't know how much [REDACTED] who served this Agency so well as Special Counsel, has gone into these changes, so I won't dwell on them in depth, but I'll be glad to answer any questions about them. The Committee on Foreign Intelligence--of which the DCI is the chairman, and Bob Ellsworth, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Bill Hiland, Assistant to Scowcroft at the White House are members--that Committee will be given resource control: the responsibility, authority, to manage the total resources of the Intelligence Community. In the Presidential letter of 1971 that authority has existed, but it hasn't had the machinery, really, to be implemented, so I view that as something that can result in a more efficient use of resources--we're all taxpayers--and, hopefully, as we restructure the USIB and these other boards, a more effective presentation of intelligence to the policy makers. The restructuring is very important. Under it there are going to be two deputies. Eventually, both of them will probably require confirmation by the Senate, both being Presidential appointments. One of them is the Deputy for (it says "Day-To-Day Operations," and I am worrying about my job so I want to qualify it a little bit) looking after the management of this Central Intelligence Agency, the other, the same responsibility for the DCI in terms of his Community responsibility. This, I think, is an efficient system. It's one recommendation that was made by Bill Colby and many others, and I think it is going to help make for better intelligence and that is what we are here to do.

I understand the fact of competition. Indeed, competition between elements in the Community is not altogether unhealthy. I expect you analysts here would concede that there is no finality to the objectivity of analysis. There is some subjective judgment in there. And to the degree two reasonable people can sit down and come up with different conclusions based on the same evidence, you don't want to present the President with fifty options and say, "It might be this and, on the other hand, it is that or this." I mean, that to the degree there is honest difference of opinion,

stimulated through competition, I'm not worried about that. I think it is good. But what I think we've got to work against is a kind of "we versus them" (CIA versus Military kind of a thing) and I hope that, although as a competitor myself, I can sympathize with this sometimes, I hope that we don't overdo that because it really isn't conducive to the best possible intelligence.

We are considering now putting the Intelligence Community Staff someplace else. It will cause the highway department a problem because they have a big sign out there saying that the Intelligence Community Staff is here, but it may be someplace else. The reason for this is that it will give the appearance of objectivity. That's not enough. I have to be objective when I'm wearing the hat of the Director of Central Intelligence as opposed to the CIA hat. But I think separating out the staff from the CIA gives an appearance of objectivity that will be well received in the Community. Again, it is a suggestion that many people in this building made, and I think in implementing it, it will be helpful to the entire Community. A personal word in regard to this; I did not come here prejudiced in any way against this organization, rather I came here prejudiced very strongly in favor of the organization. To that end I have not brought with me from the outside a lot of people. There may be some come here. There won't be many. I'm reinforced even more so than when I first came here that it is not necessary. This place is just loaded with talent. I mentioned to the morning staff meeting, and I feel very strongly about it, that though I reserve the right to bring new blood into the Agency, and I think others in the Personnel shop are concerned that this happen from time to time, I'm tremendously well satisfied with the level of competence that I have encountered here and have no plans to bring a large personal staff here to the Central Intelligence Agency.

A word about tomorrow in relation to the United States Congress. These hearings have been unproductive in one sense and that is that they have pitted the Agency and the Community in a kind of adversary relationship with Congress. It is hard to make judgments when the climate isn't calm. I found that when you make a judgment in the face of tremendous adversity or something really in turmoil, you might make the wrong judgment. So, I believe it is hard to judge really how we stand with Congress. But let me give you a personal observation on this. When I went up to my Senate hearing, there was understandable reservation (and I say this in all sincerity) understandable reservation on the part of some as

to whether I ought to be in this job. I understood it. I was in the political process, in the Congress for four years, and I understood their reservation about clearly being sure that this place not be politicized. But the point I want to make is that the tone of the hearings and some of the conversations I had and the kind of sharp edges on those editorials really had me very much concerned, less personally than whether this was some manifestation of the fact that, no matter how well intentioned I was, the job really couldn't click, you know. But something important happened in late December. There were two really important things, one of them deeply tragic (that, of course, was the death of your colleague, mine now, and that suddenly stopped some of the excess public opinion in its tracks), and the other thing that happened just about the same time was that the Congress of the United States went home. They fanned out across this country. They talked to the people and they found out that there is this basic reservoir of support. And when they came back here the mood changed noticeably to those of us that have a lot of contact with the Hill. We noticed it a lot. Now that doesn't mean to say that this Agency should tell the Congress to "go to hell" and hunker down in the trenches and hope that there is no more congressional attention to intelligence. That is not the way it is going to be, and I'm convinced that that is not the way it should be. What I hope, though, is that there is much more awareness now of the need for secrecy and the need for some information being kept very, very privileged than there was in the fall of last year. I think you're seeing that work out in the House, not, as Mr. Pike suggested, because the CIA cleverly manipulated Congress (if we have somebody clever enough to manipulate the Congress, I would like to meet you afterwards in the back of the room). Pike says that the reason public opinion changed is because the CIA had some kind of program to make his committee look bad. And on one of these ghastly talk shows I heard some columnist, I'll tell you who it was, it was Mr. Hawk of the New York Times, say that this was a plan, masterminded by the CIA to turn public opinion around. Well, the people that formulated that plan should have done something like that about a year ago, I think. It's just balderdash; it's not true. So having said that, I think there is a more sensible attitude on the Hill but I also think that each of us should bear in mind that we are a tri-partite form of government, that we have an obligation to keep Congress informed just as we do the Executive Branch and I'm going to walk that tightrope.

I'm going to try to respect the need for secrecy and the need for keeping things private and I also am going to try to respect the Constitution that talks about a tri-partite form of government. I'm not scared of the Congress and I don't think that you ought to be either. There are some up there who are going to be difficult to get along with but, generally speaking, I think we are moving into an era where, if we talk about tomorrow, the relationships with the United States Congress can be productive; can result in more support for some of the programs that some of you people are working on; can result in more support and understanding for the finality of our intelligence product.

I would end only on kind of a personal note. I was piqued a little bit when one of the columnists (and I will leave this guy's name out; it is a man, though, ladies) said anybody dumb enough to accept the job of Director of Central Intelligence is too dumb to do it. Well, he got a pretty good laugh out of it, too, but it really shook me up a little bit. He was being glib and I expect that if I sat down with him (I know him quite well), we would find we had more commonality, more agreement than that. It troubled me because it seemed to underestimate the seriousness of our purpose here. It seemed to me to be a denigration of the lifetime of work that many of you have donated to your country unselfishly in the face of criticism (kids coming home from school, wondering about what the heck mother or father was doing) and it just seemed insensitive to the enormous problems that we were going through as a country (and maybe still are) at that point, which was two months ago. So I have no regrets whatsoever about this thing. In fact, as I said at my swearing-in, I view it as a tremendous challenge. I consider myself very fortunate to be here. And I have a kind of nice, warm feeling that with your help, it's all going to work out.

Thank you very, very much and I will be glad to answer any questions.

Any questions?

Q: (Question inaudible)

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A: Maybe I'm a little naive, but I'm not anticipating enormous problems in getting the Defense Department to cooperate with the Committee on Foreign Intelligence, the CFI, which is the committee I mentioned earlier that is charged with resource responsibility. The reason I'm not is that this was rather carefully explained by the President to the Chairman of Joint Chiefs, to the Secretary of Defense and to the Deputy Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. Now, I know that this is the tip of the iceberg, you might say, but I think if we and the DCI and the Community staff approach the Community responsibilities in an ecumenical, objective way, I think we can lay to rest the Defense Department's fears. I know that some of the Defense people on USIB are very enthusiastic about this because I think they see by having their budgets signed off on by the Intelligence Community, by the Director of Central Intelligence, that they have a more understanding forum, you might say, than if they were just a tiny percentage. Even though they're a tremendous percentage of our budget; they're a tiny percentage of the total Defense budget. So I don't anticipate total warfare on cooperating with the CFI on resource matters. Again, I know there is going to be some of it.

The area that is difficult, and some here are trying to give me help on this already, is how one defines "national program." How much under this order the DCI has been pulled back from his previous mandate to butt into the tactical matters, to concern himself with tactical intelligence. So, this order pulls the DCI back from pure tactical. But the problem is: what's "tactical" and what's "national?" To the degree that's definable, I don't see that there is a major problem. To the degree we are talking about grey areas, I can see that there might be some struggles. So far things are going fairly well, and I think that resource part will work, and I know what I'm supposed to do. I read the thing and I'm going to try to do it. I may be coming in here looking for some help but I think that part will work because I don't feel great hostility in Defense, although there will be some pockets of resistance.

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Q: (Question inaudible)

A: I think there is room for some legislation on these things, the "Thou shalt nots," for example-- the assassination thing. Legislation has been proposed on that. The only problem you've got if you go down each abuse highlighted by the Rockefeller Report, is it sounds so kind of reactionary. It sounds like closing the barn after the horse has run out, and don't make Castro's beard drop off any more. I don't think we need legislation for each abuse, be it actual or alleged, but in an area like assassinations, which deeply troubles the conscience of all people I am sure, I see no problem with it. In terms of legislating the oversight mechanism which may be a question involved also, the President has taken action by creating an Oversight Board, by encouraging through executive order a much more active Inspector General system. We are implementing it. We are in the process now of sending something to each and everybody here saying, "Look, if you see things that you feel are in violation of policy or clearly are things that trouble you from a moral sense, that would fit into this category of abuse, go to the Inspector General, and if that's not satisfactory, hand it over to the Oversight Committee." Those things are set up by administrative edict. I am not totally opposed, in fact I haven't even thought out whether that part of the machinery should be legislated and should go on in some commission beyond any given administration. Perhaps that would be more reassuring to the outside public. But I have always worried about commissions kind of expanding and becoming some new bureaucracy which might impose itself in between the CIA and the administration or in between the CIA and the Congress, but I have no real fixed views that that would be wrong. Some of the abuses are going to be legislated against and I think they were right in not drawing up legislation for a wider range of specific abuse.

Any others? I've exhausted you. Thank you very, very much.

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1F-04 Hqs.

Att: DD/A 76-1163

Pat:

Attached transcript of DCI address to "CIA: Today and Tomorrow" is forwarded per our phone conversation. A copy was also handcarried to [REDACTED] today per your request.

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Attached are the original and one copy of the text of the Director's talk to "CIA: Today and Tomorrow" on 4 March. I would be inclined to classify ADMIN - INTERNAL USE ONLY except for the reference to

names which probably would make it CONFIDENTIAL in a technical sense.

AR
Alfonso Rodriguez

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